

Application No.: 09/839,664  
Response to FOA of 11/25/05

**Amendments to the Claims**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims:**

1. (currently amended) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:
  - a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server  $S_i$  to a plurality of servers including  $S_i$ , wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;
  - b) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set;
  - c) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers, if at least one server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket; and
  - d) collecting the identity of any server  $S_k$  broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set, upon receipt of the broadcast, wherein step d) is repeated as long as  $S_i$  has not received its own broadcast and there is no server  $S_k$  in the second answer set such that the associated answer set is a subset of the second answer set.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein step b) is performed until a majority of servers has answered.
3. (canceled)
4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
  - e) accepting the e-ticket if  $S_i$  receives its own broadcast and the answer set is a subset of the second answer set.
5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:
  - d) rejecting the e-ticket if  $S_i$  has received its own broadcast and the answer set is not a subset of the second answer set.
6. (currently amended) ~~The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:~~

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A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

- a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server  $S_i$  to a plurality of servers including  $S_i$ , wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;
- b) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set;
- c) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers, if at least one server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;
- d) collecting the identity of any server  $S_k$  broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set, upon receipt of the broadcast; and
- e) rejecting the e-ticket if the answer set is a subset of the second answer set and  $S_i$  has not received its own broadcast.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the e-ticket represents a prior reservation of goods or services.

8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the e-ticket contains no information specifically identifying the owner.

9. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein broadcasts are performed in accordance with a selected one of a pure atomic broadcast, a general broadcast, a CT-broadcast, and an OPT-broadcast protocol.

10. (currently amended) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

- a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server  $S_i$  to a plurality of servers including  $S_i$ , wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered any inquiry for the e-ticket;
- b) selecting a conflict mode if at least one selected server of a majority of servers answered a previous inquiry for the e-ticket; and
- c) selecting a conflict-free mode if none of the majority of servers has answered any previous inquiry for the e-ticket, wherein step b) further comprises the steps of:
  - i) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers; and

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ii) collecting the identity of any server  $S_k$  broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set upon receipt of the broadcast; and wherein step b) (ii) is repeated as long as  $S_i$  has not received its own broadcast and there is no server  $S_k$  in the second answer set such that the associated answer set  $\subseteq$  the second answer set.

11. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein step c) further comprises the step of:

i) accepting the e-ticket.

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of:

d) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set.

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

15. (currently amended) The method of claim 10-14 further comprising the step of accepting the e-ticket if  $S_i$  receives its own broadcast and the answer set  $\subseteq$  the second answer set.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 10-14 further comprising the step of rejecting the e-ticket if  $S_i$  has received its own broadcast and the answer set is not a subset of the second answer set.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 10-14 further comprising the step of:

d) rejecting the e-ticket if the answer set  $\subseteq$  the second answer set and  $S_i$  has not received its own broadcast.

18. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein the e-ticket represents a prior reservation of goods or services.

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19. (original) The method of claim 13 wherein broadcasts are performed in accordance with a selected one of a pure atomic broadcast, a general broadcast, a CT-broadcast, and an OPT-broadcast protocol.